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United States
Department of
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Office of
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Selected Speeches and News Releases

September 26 - October 2, 1991

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U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Public Affairs

USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE AND USER MARKETING CERTIFICATE PAYMENT RATE FOR UPLAND COTTON

WASHINGTON, Sept. 26—John Stevenson, acting executive vice president of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation, today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (micronaire 3.5-3.6 and 4.3-4.9, strength 24-25 grams per tex) upland cotton (base quality), the coarse count adjustment and the user marketing certificate payment rate in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, Sept. 27, through midnight Thursday, Oct. 3.

The Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended, provides that the adjusted world price (AWP) may be further adjusted if: (a) the AWP is less than 115 percent of the current crop year loan rate for base quality upland cotton, and (b) the Friday through Thursday average price quotation for the lowest-priced U.S. growth as quoted for Middling (M) 1-3/32 inch cotton, C.I.F. northern Europe (U.S. Northern Europe price) exceeds the Northern Europe price. The maximum allowable adjustment is the difference between the U.S. Northern Europe price and the Northern Europe price.

Based on data for the week ending Sept. 26, a further adjustment to this week's calculated AWP may be made in accordance with this provision. The calculated AWP is 104.81 percent of the 1991 upland cotton base quality loan rate, and the U.S. Northern Europe price exceeds the Northern Europe price by 3.10 cents per pound. Below are the relevant calculations.

I.	Calculated AWP	53.21 cents per pound
	1991 Base Loan Rate	50.77 cents per pound
	AWP as a Percent of Loan Rate	104.81
II.	U.S. Northern Europe Price	72.70 cents per pound
	Northern Europe Price	-69.60 cents per pound
	Maximum Adjustment Allowed	3.10 cents per pound

Based on a consideration of the U.S. share of world exports, the current level of cotton export sales and cotton export shipments, and other relevant data, a further adjustment to this week's calculated AWP will not be made.

Based on data for the week ending Sept. 26, the AWP for base quality upland cotton and the coarse count adjustment are determined as follows:

Adjusted World Price		
Northern Europe Price		69.60
Adjustments:		
Average U.S. spot market location	14.14	
SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton	1.90	
Average U.S. location	0.35	
Sum of Adjustments		-16.39
Calculated AWP		-53.21
Further AWP adjustment		- 0
ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE		53.21 cents/lb.
Coarse Count Adjustment		
Northern Europe Price		69.60
Northern Europe Coarse Count Price		-67.15
		2.45
Adjustment to SLM 1-1/32 inch cotton		-4.20
		-1.75
COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT		0 cents/lb.

Since the AWP is above the 1989, 1990 and 1991 crop base quality loan rates of 50.00, 50.27 and 50.77 cents per pound, respectively, the loan repayment rates for the 1989, 1990 and 1991 crops of upland cotton during this period are equal to the respective loan rates, adjusted for the specific quality and location, plus any applicable interest and charges.

The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates. Because the AWP in effect is above the established loan rate, loan deficiency payments are not available for 1991-crop upland cotton during this period.

Based on data for the week ending Sept. 26, the U.S. Northern Europe price exceeded the Northern Europe price by more than 1.25 cents per pound for the fourth consecutive week, resulting in a certificate payment

rate of 1.85 cents per pound. Relevant data used in determining the user marketing certificate payment rate are summarized below:

Week	For the Friday through Thursday Period Ending	U.S. Northern Europe Price (1)	Northern Europe Price (2)	(1) Minus (2)	Certificate Payment Rate[1]
			.... *cents per pound*		
1	Sept. 5, 1991	74.50	71.39	3.11	1.86
2	Sept. 12, 1991	73.90	70.42	3.48	2.23
3	Sept. 19, 1991	72.15	69.61	2.54	1.29
4	Sept. 26, 1991	72.70	69.60	3.10	1.85

[1](1) minus (2) for Week 4 minus 1.25 cents.

The next announcement of the AWP, coarse count adjustment and user marketing certificate payment rate will be made on Thursday, Oct. 3.

Charles Cunningham (202) 447-7954

#

USDA POSTPONES USER FEES FOR INSPECTING BAGGAGE FROM HAWAII AND PUERTO RICO

WASHINGTON, Sept. 27—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is postponing until further notice implementation of user fees for inspecting passenger baggage on airline flights from Hawaii and Puerto Rico to the continental United States.

According to B. Glen Lee, deputy administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, the postponement of user fees is intended to resolve concerns voiced by affected parties. Baggage inspections will continue.

Under a final rule published April 23 and a postponement published Aug. 1, a $2 per passenger fee for Hawaii and Puerto Rico would have become effective Oct. 1. User fees are already in effect to cover the costs of inspecting the baggage of arriving international passengers.

APHIS inspections are needed to prevent certain dangerous plant pests from moving from Hawaii and Puerto Rico to other parts of the United States. Failure to intercept items covered by an agricultural quarantine can lead to costly infestations of crops.

The major risk is from travelers who bring back fruits, vegetables, plants and various agricultural souvenirs from trips to Hawaii or Puerto Rico—areas where exotic pests occur. Undeclared items intercepted by APHIS inspectors can lead to fines ranging from $50 to $1,000.

Notice of the postponement is being published in the Sept. 30 Federal Register.

Douglas Hendrix (301) 436-7253

#

MADIGAN NAMES PRIVATE-SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES FOR MISSION TO SOVIET UNION

WASHINGTON, Sept. 26—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan today named 10 private-sector representatives from the U.S. agriculture industry who will accompany him on his upcoming mission to the Soviet Union.

Madigan is leading the Oct. 1-10 mission at the direction of President Bush to help the Soviet Union and its republics establish efficient agricultural production and delivery systems as the country moves toward freemarket democracy.

Madigan said the mission also will continue making U.S. assessments of the need for short-term food-assistance to the Soviets this winter.

"But our main goal will be helping the Soviet central and republic governments institute changes that promise longer-term benefits in their progress toward stable democracy," Madigan said. "Improvements are needed in the country's systems of transportation, distribution, storage and marketing of agricultural goods, and this is why these private-sector delegates are so important.

"Their expertise in U.S. agriculture—the world's most productive and efficient—covers the spectrum from on-farm production to consumer retailing," Madigan said.

The private-sector delegates are: Russell J. Bragg, vice president, Food Sector, Grand Metropolitan Inc., parent company of Pillsbury Co., Minneapolis, Minn.; Majeed Gheissari, Countertrade Manager, FMC

Corp. N.V., Brussels; Howard S. Gochberg, vice president for ingredients and logistics, Land O'Lakes Inc., Minneapolis; Minn.; Maurice A. Gordon, corn and soybean producer, Rantoul, Ill., and past chairman of the board, U.S. Feed Grains Council.

Also, Mark Kuechler, division manager, Southland Distribution Center, Fredericksburg, Va; Chester McCorkle, professor of agribusiness, University of CaliforniaDavis, Davis, Calif.; Edward L. Moyers, chairman and chief executive officer, Illinois Central Railroad Co., Chicago, Ill..

Robert H. Peyton, president of ConAgra USSR, Omaha, Neb.; Gary Ray, group vice president,George A. Hormel & Co., Austin, Minn.; Wayne A. Showers, president of Griffin & Brand of McAllen Inc., McAllen, Texas, and a former director of the United Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Association.

Madigan said an announcement listing other members of the delegation, which will include officials from the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, and State, the Agency for International Development and the National Security Council, will be made soon.

Roger Runningen (202) 447-4623

#

USDA ANNOUNCES SUGAR TARIFF RATE QUOTA FOR 1991/92 PERIOD

WASHINGTON, Sept. 27—Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Ann M. Veneman today announced the 1991/92 U.S. tariff-rate quota for sugar to be allowed entry into the United States at the low duty rate at 1,385,000 metric tons, raw value (1,526,701 short tons, raw value), effective Oct. 1.

Total authorized quota shipments are the sum of the specialty sugar quota, the minimum quota allocations, the quota adjustment amount and the base import quota minus certain adjustments in the base import quota.

For the Oct. 1, 1991, to Sept. 30, 1992 period, 332 metric tons, raw value (366 short tons, raw value) are established as the quota adjustment amount; 1,656 metric tons, raw value (about 1,825 short tons, raw value) are established as the specialty sugar import quota; and 1,321,000 metric tons, raw value (about 1,456,153 short tons, raw value) are established as the base import quota. In addition, the minimum quota allocation is set at

72,580 metric tons, raw value (about 80,006 short tons, raw value).

The 1991/92 country-by-country tariff rate quota allocations for sugar allowed entry into the United States at the low duty rate were announced today by U.S. Trade Representative Carla Hills. These allocations are as follows (in metric tons, raw value):

Argentina	56,817	Australia	109,671
Barbados	9,249	Belize	14,535
Bolivia	10,571	Brazil	191,593
Colombia	31,712	Congo	7,258
Costa Rica	19,820	Cote d'Ivoire	7,258
Dominican Republic	232,555	Ecuador	14,535
El Salvador	34,355	Fiji	11,892
Gabon	7,258	Guatemala	63,424
Guyana	15,856	Haiti	7,258
Honduras	13,213	India	10,571
Jamaica	14,535	Madagascar	7,258
Malawi	13,213	Mauritius	15,856
Mexico	7,258	Mozambique	17,177
Nicaragua	27,748	Panama	38,319
Papua New Guinea	7,258	Paraguay	7,258
Peru	54,175	Philippines	178,380
St. Kitts and Nevis	7,258	South Africa	30,391
Swaziland	21,141	Taiwan	15,856
Thailand	18,499	Trinidad-Tobago	9,249
Uruguay	7,258	Zimbabwe	15,856

The conversion factor to short tons is one metric ton equals 1.10231125 short tons.

Sally Klusaritz (202) 447-3448

#

USDA OFFERS TIPS FOR SAFE COOKING ON CAMPUS

WASHINGTON—Many college students use small microwave ovens or toaster-ovens to prepare food in dormitories. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Meat and Poultry Hotline gets many calls from parents and students with questions about the handling and storage of foods in dorms. Here are some sample questions and answers, with tips on safe food handling:

Q. Our dorm has a kitchen with a microwave on each floor. Often food prepared according to the printed directions is not cooked as thoroughly as I like it. What is wrong?

A. In a large building like a dorm, other electrical equipment such as personal computers, toaster-ovens and stereos can compete for current and reduce the electrical wattage of a microwave. A community oven may also be used more frequently than one at home. A microwave oven that has just cooked several foods often cooks slower than a cold oven. To compensate, set the oven for the maximum time given in the instructions, or add several seconds more cooking time.

Cover foods for cooking in a microwave. Stir or rearrange food, and rotate the dish during cooking. If your oven has a temperature probe, use it or a meat thermometer to check internal temperatures of meat and poultry. To avoid food-safety hazards, red meat should be cooked to 160 degrees F; poultry to 180 degrees F. Juices should run clear.

Remember that microwaved foods continue to cook after they are removed from the oven, so allow foods to stand before they are eaten.

Q. I am living off campus this year. My two roommates and I will be preparing our own meals. We know how to cook and we plan to buy healthy food. What else do we need to know to make this a successful venture and and avoid food-safety problems?

A. When shopping, buy perishable foods last and get them home quickly. Never leave perishable food in a hot car while you run other errands. Refrigerate perishables as soon as you get home. Freeze any fresh meat, fish or poultry you won't use in the next few days.

Thaw frozen foods in the refrigerator—not on the counter. Wash your hands before preparing food. Always use clean dishtowels and sponges. Wash cutting boards and utensils in hot, soapy water. Use a plastic—not wooden—cutting board. Don't allow raw meat or poultry juices to drip on

other foods. Cook food thoroughly. Never partially cook food. Finally, if you feel food has not been handled safely, throw it out.

Q. I frequently send "care packages" to my son at college. What other foods besides cookies, crackers and candy can I send safely?

A. For a change of pace, send a sampling of the new shelf-stable, microwavable entrees now available in supermarkets. They are not frozen and keep fresh without refrigeration for more than 18 months. More than a dozen different entrees are available—from hearty chili, roast beef and lasagna to more exotic linguini with clam sauce. Your son can stack them on the bookcase and use them as needed. Loaf cakes, like banana bread, carrot, applesauce or sour-cream cakes, ship well if wrapped in aluminum foil and packed in a can or box. Packages of hard or processed cheese and some sausages like beef sticks, dry salami and pepperoni don't need to be refrigerated. These mail well too. Check the label carefully for handling instructions.

Q. My daughter's college is only a four-hour drive away so she comes home for the holidays. How can I safely pack leftovers for her to take back to school?

A. For a four-hour drive, food must be handled properly to keep it safe from spoilage and food poisoning bacteria. The leftover foods should be divided into small, shallow containers and cooled in the refrigerator prior to the trip. To transport the food, pack a cooler with ice or a freeze-pack insert, and add the cold containers of food from the refrigerator when she's ready to leave. Freezing foods prior to the return trip is also an option. During the drive, the cooler should be kept in the passenger area of the car. It's much cooler than the trunk. Advise your daughter to refrigerate the food as soon as she arrives at school.

For answers to other questions about food safety, call USDA's Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-800-535-4555. The Hotline is open weekdays 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Eastern time. Callers in the Washington, D.C., area should dial (202) 447-3333.

Food Safety Tips For College Food Shopping and Cooking—

1. After grocery shopping, always take perishable food home quickly and refrigerate it within two hours. Don't stop by the library or visit a friend until this is done.

2. When using the microwave, follow product directions and plan for extra cooking time if you're in a dorm. Other equipment can drain current from the electrical circuit.

3. Leftover pizza, fried chicken, Chinese food, and other carry-outs should be refrigerated as soon as possible. Remember that perishable food should never be unrefrigerated more than two hours.

4. Never store foods on the window ledge even if the weather is cold (not even that pizza box). Buildings radiate heat, making the sill warmer than the outside temperature. And, using a metal box to protect food from birds and animals could act as an "oven" in direct sunlight.

5. "Care packages" of food from home are always welcome. But be sure to check any can or package labels to see if the products require refrigeration after opening.

Jim Greene (202) 382-0314
Issued Sept. 27, 1991

#

NEW BLACKEYE PEA DELIVERS KNOCK-OUT PUNCH

WASHINGTON, Sept. 30—A new southern blackeye pea packs a double payoff for both home gardeners and commercial growers: it resists attack from two of the crops most damaging pests in the southeastern states and can produce up to 35 percent higher yields, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists.

"Bettergro Blackeye" is the result of 12 years of breeding by scientists with USDA's Agricultural Research Service in Charleston, S.C. The new variety is resistant to both the cowpea curculio that invades pea pods, and to the root-knot nematodes that live in the soil and damage plant roots, said Philip D. Dukes, a plant pathologist with the agency's U.S. Vegetable Laboratory in Charleston.

"Bettergro Blackeye is great for home gardeners, for sale at farmer's markets and is available for commercial canning," said Dukes. He

worked with agency plant geneticist Richard L. Fery in developing the new variety, which was released this summer.

Bettergro Blackeye is especially appealing to gardeners and for farmers selling it fresh because the plants can yield a second, late-season crop in the fall, after producing a first set of peas in the summer, said Dukes.

The variety, whose pods contain an average of 12 or 13 peas each, had from 13 to 35 percent higher yields than competing varieties during field trials at about 16 locations in South Carolina, Alabama, Louisiana, Arkansas and Texas from 1986-89. Canned peas were also rated highly during quality tests conducted in Arkansas from 1987-89.

Based on the field tests, Dukes said, the variety will be infested by 75 to 98 percent fewer cowpea curculios than now attack susceptible varieties. The insect damages peas by penetrating the pod and laying its eggs inside, making the peas unmarketable.

Resistance to the root-knot nematode is crucial, Dukes said, because of the damage that pest often causes to plants in the warm, sandy soils of the Southeast. The new variety will cut down farmers' reliance on chemical nematicides, which are applied to soil and can seep into underground water.

A limited amount of Bettergro Blackeye breeder's seed is available for distribution to southern pea seed producers who make written request by Oct. 30, 1991. Also, small samples are available to interested research personnel. Address requests for seed to Dr. Richard L. Fery, U.S. Vegetable Lab, 2875 Savannah Highway, Charleston, S.C. 29414.

Sean T. Adams (301) 344-3108

#

USDA DETERMINES SUGAR MARKETING ALLOTMENTS UNNECESSARY

WASHINGTON, Sept. 30—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan announced today that sugar marketing allotments will not be established for domestic sugar for fiscal year 1992.

Madigan said this determination is based on estimated import requirements for FY 1992 of above 1.25 million short tons. This is the import level established as the trigger for marketing allotments under the

Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938, as amended. Estimates of fiscal year import requirements will be made quarterly.

Bruce Merkle (202) 447-82061

#

USDA ANNOUNCES 1992 FEED GRAIN ACREAGE REDUCTION

WASHINGTON, Sept. 30—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan today announced a 5-percent acreage reduction program (ARP) for the 1992 crops of corn, grain sorghum and barley and a zero percent ARP for oats.

The 1992-crop corn, grain sorghum and barley ARPs are lower from the 7.5 percent ARP for the 1991 crop while the oats ARP remains the same.

The Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990 requires an announcement of the 1992 feed grain ARP on or before Sept. 30. Adjustments in the 1992 ARP percentage announced today may be made not later than Nov. 15 if the total supply of feed grains changes significantly from current estimates.

"World and U.S. 1991/92 ending stocks of feed grains are historically low which makes the initial ARP announcement subject to adjustment particularly in light of uncertainties around the world," Madigan said. "Any such adjustment would be announced by Nov. 15."

Bruce Merkle (202) 447-8206

#

CCC INTEREST RATE FOR OCTOBER LOWERED TO 5-5/8 PERCENT

WASHINGTON, Oct. 1—Commodity loans disbursed in October by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation will carry a 5-5/8 percent interest rate, according to Keith Bjerke, executive vice president of the CCC.

The 5-5/8 percent interest rate is down from September's 6 percent and reflects the interest rate charged CCC by the U.S. Treasury in October.

Bruce Merkle (202) 447-8206

#

MADIGAN AND DELEGATES LEAVE FOR MISSION TO SOVIET UNION

WASHINGTON, Oct. 1—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan and a delegation of federal officials and private representatives from U.S. agriculture will leave this afternoon on a mission to the Soviet Union.

Madigan is leading the 10-day mission directed by President Bush to help the Soviet Union and its republics improve their agricultural production and distribution as the country moves toward a free-market system.

"We will continue to assess the area's food needs and determine how the United States and other nations can help alleviate possible hardships. We will have a full compliment of experts to assess potential problems at every point in the Soviet marketing chain, from their farms to their processors, all the way to the consumer," Madigan said.

The delegation will be in Moscow, St. Petersburg and Kiev. Working sessions include meetings with high level officials of the Soviet Union and the republics. Madigan and the delegates will provide President Bush with recommendations when they return.

Cameron D. Bruemmer (202) 447-6307

#

USDA ANNOUNCES GSM-102 CREDIT GUARANTEES TO THE SOVIET UNION FOR FISCAL 1992

WASHINGTON, Oct. 1—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan today announced that up to $585 million in credit guarantees will be made available in connection with sales of U.S. agricultural commodities to the Soviet Union under the Commodity Credit Corporation's (CCC) Export Credit Guarantee Program (GSM-102) for fiscal 1992. Today's action will make operational $185 million from the $585 million program allocation.

According to Madigan, $104 million in credit guarantees is available to U.S. exporters for sales of feedgrains (barley, corn, sorghum and oats); $43 million for wheat and/or flour; and $23 million for protein meals (soybean meal, cottonseed meal, linseed meal and sunflowerseed meal).

The unallocated amount of $400 million includes up to $30 million in coverage to be provided on credit extended for freight costs incurred in

C&F and CIF sales. Further specifics pertaining to allocation of this $400 million will be announced at a later date.

With respect to today's $185.0 million allocation, up to $15 million is available to cover the freight portion of sales made on a C&F or CIF basis. Exporter's applications for such coverage must include estimated freight costs. CCC will maintain a tally of those reported freight estimates and when the tally reaches $15.0 million, no additional guarantee coverage will be extended for the freight component of sales made on a C&F or CIF basis. After that point, any further guarantees will be issued to cover only the FOB or FAS value of a sale, even if the sale is made on a C&F or CIF basis.

CCC will guarantee 100 percent of the principal on credits extended in connection with sales under this allocation, as well as provide interest coverage equal to the coupon equivalent yield of the 52-week U.S. Treasury bill auction average. Based upon the most recently announced 52-week Treasury bill rate, the applicable guarantee fee on individual sales under this allocation will be determined at the time CCC receives the exporter's application for payment guarantee in accordance with FAS Program Announcement GSM-91-5 released on Sept. 27. Eligible interest will be determined as of the date of export, and thereafter will be subject to adjustment as of each principal and/or interest due date. The adjusted rate will take effect on the day after the interest and/or principal due date and remain in effect through the next interest and/or principal due date.

The guarantor is the Bank for Foreign Economic Affairs (Vneshekonombank).

U.S. exporters are reminded that all applications for guarantees are subject to commodity price review.

To be eligible for up to three-year coverage, all sales must be registered by Sept. 30, 1992, and exporters' contractual arrangements must call for exports not later than Nov. 30, 1992. Under this program, all sales must be registered and exported during the period in which the Soviet Union is eligible to participate in CCC export credit guarantee programs, consistent with the provisions of the Jackson-Vanik amendment.

U.S. exporters registering for credit guarantees must report to CCC the actual export period as provided in their credit sale. Exporters should not simply use the final export date listed under announcements authorizing the guarantees.

CCC, in accordance with Section 1493.60(d) of program regulations,

shall cause the final date to export to be shown on the payment guarantee as one month after the contractual deadline for exporting.

U.S. exporters must apply to CCC for coverage before exports are completed and written applications must be accompanied by payment of a guarantee fee.

CCC will issue GSM-102 payment guarantees based on the "port value" of the commodity, as defined in the regulations. Exporters who apply for guarantees based on the port value of the commodity, C&F or CIF basis, must provide CCC with an estimate of that portion of the port value of the sale which reflects the value of the freight service provided. Only non-Soviet flagged vessels are eligible for freight coverage.

For further information, call (202) 447-3224.

For 24-hour information on Export Credits activities, call (202) 472-1621.

All FAS news releases issued each day are available through a FAX machine. To receive the releases, callers should set their FAX machines for polling and dial (202) 382-1728.

Cameron Bruemmer (202) 447-4623

#

MEAT IMPORTS PROJECTED BELOW 1991 QUOTA TRIGGER LEVEL

WASHINGTON, Oct. 1—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan today announced that U.S. meat imports for calendar year 1991 are projected at 1,318.4 million pounds—100,000 pounds below the level that would require quotas on imports.

Madigan said that the United States will not have to impose the quota because Australia and New Zealand, the two largest suppliers of imported meats, have agreed to limit their meat exports to the United States for the rest of the year. Australia has agreed to limit exports to 743 million pounds and New Zealand has agreed to limit exports to 445 million pounds.

The Meat Import Act of 1979 requires the President to restrict imports of certain meats—primarily fresh beef and veal—if the U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that imports will equal or exceed a trigger level set at the beginning of each calelendar year. The trigger level, determined by formula in the Act, is 1,318.5 million pounds for 1991.

Import projections are made four times a year. The trigger level and first quarterly estimate for 1992 will be announced on or about Jan. 1, 1992.

Imports of meat subject to the law by month are:

Month	1988	1989	1990	1991
	- - - - - - - - - - - *Million pounds*			- - - - - - - - - - -
January	135.6	74.5	90.7	66.0
February	112.3	80.3	97.1	85.9
March	144.8	88.5	115.4	114.4
April	146.6	97.1	118.0	97.1
May	134.7	104.0	76.9	101.5
June	142.7	103.4	100.8	145.2
July	124.4	114.6	121.3	121.9
August	123.0	111.0	122.2	144.7
September	140.4	90.2	137.7	113.8
October	118.7	83.6	99.9	
November	114.2	57.4	131.8	
December	84.9	136.8	141.0	
Total*	1,521.3	1,141.2	1,352.8	

*Totals may not add due to rounding.

Sally Klusaritz (202) 447-3448

#

USDA SEEKS COMMENT ON PROPOSAL TO RAISE PLANT VARIETY PROTECTION FEE

WASHINGTON, Oct. 2—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing an increase in the composite fee for issuing a plant variety protection certificate from $2,400 to $2,600 to cover the costs of administering the program.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service said the increases are from $250 to $275 for the application, from $1,900 to $2,050 for the search, and from $250 to $275 for

processing the certificate. An applicant denied a certificate pays no final fee.

The 1970 Plant Variety Protection Act requires collection of fees to cover costs of issuing certificates, Haley said. Mandated salary adjustments and changes in the federal retirement system account for most of the cost increases. Present fees have been in effect since 1989, he said.

USDA also proposes changing the language in the PVP regulations regarding correcting certificates. To make the regulations agree with the wording in the Plant Variety Protection Act, the term ''certificate of correction'' in the regulation would be changed to ''corrected certificate.''

The plant variety protection program provides patent-like security to developers of new and distinctive seed-produced plants ranging from food crops to ornamental.

Details of the proposed fee increase appeared as a proposed rule in the Sept. 3 Federal Register. Comments must be received by Nov. 1 and should be sent to Kenneth H. Evans, USDA, AMS, Science Division, National Agricultural Library Building, 10301 Baltimore Blvd., Beltsville, MD. 20705.

Becky Unkenholz (202) 447-8998

#

OLDER WOMEN'S SPINES GET THE "SUNSHINE" THEY NEED

WASHINGTON, Oct. 2—Older women can increase spine bone by getting more of the ''sunshine vitamin''—vitamin D—along with extra calcium during the short and gloomy days of winter, according to a U.S. Department of Agriculture study.

''We find that postmenopausal women living in the temperate zone benefit from increasing their vitamin D intake to about 500 International Units (I.U.) daily,'' said study leader Bess Dawson-Hughes.

From May to October, she said, exposure to sunshine prompts the skin to manufacture enough of the vitamin. It helps the body absorb calcium and phosphorus from the diet and deposit the minerals in bones.

Dawson-Hughes, a physician, and colleagues at USDA's Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging at Tufts, Boston, measured bone density in 247 women past menopause three times during a year-long

study. They reported the findings in the current issue of Annals of Internal Medicine.

The study was supported by USDA's Agricultural Research Service, which funds the Boston center.

In addition to getting 800 milligrams of calcium each day, half of the women got a 400-I.U. supplement of vitamin D, while the other half got a placebo. All got about 100 I.U. daily from their diets.

Both groups had an increase in spine bone during the first measurement period from June or July to December or January. And both had a loss during the second measurement period from December or January to June or July. But the group getting the vitamin D supplement had less than half as much loss as the group getting the placebo, she said.

As a result, these women had an overall increase in spine bone of 0.85 percent during the year compared with no net change for the placebo group. Extra vitamin D did not increase total body calcium, said Dawson- Hughes, based on sophisticated x-ray scans of the whole body.

"Unfortunately," she said, "it's difficult to get an extra 400 I.U. of vitamin D from foods. One would have to drink about a quart of milk a day or eat a serving of fatty fish, such as herring or salmon."

The Recommended Dietary Allowance for women over age 51 is 200 I.U. compared to the 500 I.U. consumed in this study. Procter and Gamble of Cincinnati, Ohio, supplied the vitamin D and calcium supplements.

The study was a natural extension of a two-year calcium trial reported in September 1990. It showed that 800 mg of calcium per day could significantly retard bone loss in women six or more years past menopause, provided their normal intake was under 400 mg per day.

Good sources of dietary calcium include dairy products, broccoli and calcium fortified fruit juices, Dawson-Hughes said.

During that study, colleague Elizabeth Krall observed that the women had lower blood levels of vitamin D in the winter and spring months and higher levels of a hormone thought to pull calcium from the bones. Similar changes in blood levels were observed in the placebo group during this study, said Dawson-Hughes.

Earlier studies at the Boston center and elsewhere have indicated that vitamin D deficiency among older people, especially those who live in northern climates, may be a major unrecognized public health problem.

As people age, the ability of their skin to manufacture the vitamin in the presence of sunlight decreases dramatically, researchers found.

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USDA SEEKS COMPANIES FOR TRADE MISSION TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

WASHINGTON, Oct. 2—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is seeking investors and representatives of U.S. companies involved in producing, processing, and sourcing agricultural products to participate in an agribusiness trade and investment mission to the Dominican Republic Jan. 26-31.

"The investment climate in the Dominican Republic has become attractive because of the Dominican government's willingness to work with the International Monetary Fund and other financial institutions on official debt rescheduling," said Duane Acker, administrator of USDA's Office of International Cooperation and Development.

Major reforms introduced by the government last year also created a more stable economic environment and increased potential for two-way trade.

In 1990, U.S. exports to the Dominican Republic were about $238 million or 74 percent of total Dominican agricultural imports. Dominican agricultural exports to the United States totaled about $318 million ($51 million in non-traditional products.)

Dominican companies are interested in developing business partnerships with U.S. counterparts in fresh tropical fruits and vegetables, processed food products, cut flowers, and development of uncultivated land.

Participants in the mission will learn first-hand about the production and two-way trade capabilities of the Dominican agribusiness sector, meet potential partners and visit their production and processing facilities, attend a local trade show, and get acquainted with a delegation of European buyers.

The mission is sponsored by USDA and the Dominican Agribusiness Coinvestment Council, a private sector association. USDA does not charge a registration fee or administrative costs, but participants are responsible for their travel, lodging, and meals. Application forms and/or letters of intent will be accepted until January 10.

For further information, contact Maria Nemeth-Ek, Food Industries Division, Office of International Cooperation and Development, (202) 245-5983, FAX (202) 245-5749.

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